

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, EEC CA

SUBJECT: EC/CANADIAN AGREEMENT

REF EC BRUSSELS 5746

1. IN JUNE THE EC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ASKED THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES TO EXAMINE COMMISSION PROPOSALS FOR AN EC/CANADIAN AGREEMENT (REFTEL).

2. THE COMMERCIAL PROBLEMS SUB-GROUP OF THE COREPER HAS NOW HELD FOUR MEETING ON THE CANADIAN AGREEMENT, THE LATEST ON SEPTEMBER 22. SOURCES IN THE COMMISSION BELIEVE THAT THE MATTER IS VERY LIKELY TO HAVE TO GO TO THE COUNCIL AGAIN SINCE SOME MEMBER STATES - PARTICULARLY FRANCE AND BRITAIN - HAVE EXPRESSED SOME DOUBTS IN THE SUB-GROUP, ON THE GROUND THAT THE TYPE OF AGREEMENT BEING DISCUSSED AMOUNTS TO AN EXPANSION OF THE COMMISSION'S COMMERCIAL POWERS RELATIVE TO THE MEMBER STATES. THOUGH MOST PEOPLE ANTICIPATE THAT THERE WILL BE SOME AGREEMENT, IT IS NOT CERTAIN THAT THE FORMAT CHOSEN BY THE COMMISSION FOR A FRAME-WORK ECONOMIC AGREEMENT WILL BE APPROVED.

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3. THE NEW CANADIAN AMBASSADOR CADIEUX TOLD

EMBASSADOR GREENWALD THAT THE CANADIANS CONSIDER THAT IT IS NOW UP TO THE COMMUNITY TO COME FORWARD WITH A PROPOSAL ON DETAILS FOR AN AGREEMENT. HE ANTICIPATED THAT PROGRESS WOULD NOT BE RAPID AND THAT IT WOULD BE LUCKY IF THE COMMUNITY COULD AGREE ON A MANDATE FOR NEGOTIATION WITH THE CANADIANS BY THE END OF THE YEAR. HE EXPOUNDED AT SOME LENGTH ON THE BENEFITS WHICH WOULD ACCRUE TO THE UNITED STATES IF THROUGH THE MEANS OF AN AGREEMENT WITH THE EC (DIVERSIFICATION) SOME CANADIAN EXNOPHOBIA COULD BE CALMED DOWN. HE ASSURED AMBASSADOR GREENWALD AS HE HAD PREVIOUSLY ASSURED US OFFICIALS THAT CANADA'S RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES WERE FAR TOO IMPORTANT TO ALLOW CANADA TO ATTEMPT TO REACH ANY SORT OF AGREEMENT WITH THE COMMUNITY WHICH WOULD CAUSE ANTAGONISM IN THE US GOVERNMENT.

4. CADIEUX WAS, HOWEVER, JUST AS VAGUE AS CANADIAN OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN IN THE PAST ABOUT WHAT THE CONTENTS OF AN EC/CANADIAN AGREEMENT WOULD BE, AND HE SEEMED TO UNDERSTAND WHY SUCH IMPRECISION CAUSED SOME AMOUNT OF UNEASINESS IN THE US GOVERNMENT.GREENWALD

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Message Attributes

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